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Federal Communications Commission
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CITY OF LAKE CHARLES

September 25, 2003

VIA FACSIMILE & REGULAR MAIL

Ms. Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554RE Improving Public Safety Communications In the 800 MHz Band;
WT Docket No. 02-55 (Ex Parte)

Dear Madam Secretary:

The City of Lake Charles is writing to express its opposition to Nextel's so-called "Consensus Plan" and to urge the FCC to adopt the "Balanced Approach," which was filed on May 29, 2003. We believe that the Consensus Plan will unnecessarily jeopardize Public Safety communication systems. Instead, the FCC should adopt a solution, such as the Balanced Approach, that does not require Public Safety licensees to relocate and does not reduce their interference protection.

The City of Lake Charles has licensed an 800 MHz communications system, which is used by over 300 hundred public safety related employees. The communications system supports a number of the city's activities including Fire, Police, Recreation, Public Works and General Administration.

We are concerned that the Consensus Plan's relocation process is extremely complicated and there is no guarantee that Public Safety licensees will be able to continuously operate their communications systems during this process. Furthermore, it is unrealistic to expect all Public Safety licensees to relocate in 12 months or less given the complexity of some Public Safety systems.

Also, Public Safety licensees could be subject to more interference because the Consensus Plan protects Public Safety licensees only if they meet certain signal strength and receiver requirements. Because most Public Safety communication systems do not meet these requirements, they will have to expend significant resources to ensure that they are protected from interference. Further, the interference situation could be worse if rebanding is not completed before Nextel's funding runs out.

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Therefore, The City of Lake Charles supports the Balanced Approach, which is superior to the Consensus Plan because it takes pro-active steps to immediately deal with Public Safety interference by relying on technical solutions and increased enforcement. As a result, this proposal is less disruptive and less expensive than the Consensus Plan so Public Safety communications will not be jeopardized. For all the reasons stated above, the City of Lake Charles urges the FCC to adopt the Balanced Approach.

Sincerely yours,



RAND ROACH
Mayor
City of Lake Charles

RR/sra